



ULTRASOUND

What to expect from your scan



What is ultrasound?

Ultrasound is an imaging technique that uses high-frequency sound waves and a computer to see images of various organs, vessels and tissues within the body.

An ultrasound machine sends out inaudible high frequency sound waves and listens for their echoes. The sound waves travel through your body and are reflected off the internal organs. The returning echoes are converted into a picture on a monitor. The pictures are constantly updated so the scan can show movement.

Is ultrasound safe?

Yes. There are no known risks to ultrasound. It uses sound waves only and no radiation.

How do I prepare for my scan?

To ensure we achieve the best quality images, there are certain things we ask you to do depending on the type of ultrasound scan you are having.

Breast scan

It is very important that you bring all previous MRI, mammogram and ultrasound reports, CD images and films on the day of the scan for the radiologist to review. This will give the radiologist a full picture of your breast health.

Upper abdominal scan

For a study of the upper abdomen (liver, gallbladder, spleen, pancreas) you must not eat for at least four hours beforehand. During that time, only drink clear, still water or black tea. Do not drink any dairy products (yoghurt, milk and so on) or fizzy drinks, but do drink to fill your bladder during this time.

Lower abdominal scan

For an ultrasound of the lower abdomen (kidneys, ureter, bladder) you must drink 1.5 litres of water one hour before the ultrasound to fill your bladder.

Lower abdominal scan - *Continued*

It is essential that you have a full bladder at the time of your scan.

Full abdominal (upper and lower) scan

For a scan of the upper and lower abdomen you must not eat for at least four hours beforehand. During that time, only drink clear, still water or black tea. Do not drink any dairy products (yoghurt, milk and so on) or fizzy drinks. You may empty your bladder until one hour before your scan, when you must drink 1.5 litres of water without emptying your bladder. It is essential you have a full bladder at the time of your scan.

Pelvic scan

For a scan of the pelvic area (pelvis, reproductive or gynaecological system) you must drink 1.5 litres of water one hour beforehand to fill your bladder. It is essential you have a full bladder at the time of your scan.

What are the limitations of this scan?

Ultrasound waves cannot pass through very dense structures and are weakened if they have to pass a long way through the body. It is therefore not effective at examining bones, and the quality of the images may vary from person to person.

What can I expect during my scan?

Before your ultrasound begins we may ask you to change into a gown. You will have access to a locker for storing your belongings during the scan.

A consultant radiologist will perform the scan. They will ensure you are in the correct position on the examination table. They may dim the lights in the room to see the pictures on the monitor more clearly.

Next, the radiologist will put some gel onto the area of your body that they are scanning.



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How long will it take?

Ultrasound procedures typically take 15 to 20 minutes.

More complicated scans may take up to 30 to 45 minutes, depending on the part of the body being scanned.

What happens after my ultrasound?

There should be no side effects and you may eat and drink as usual and return to your normal daily routine straight away.

How do I receive my results?

After your scan, if you are a private patient the radiographer will provide you with a CD of your images to take away if you wish. (We do not usually issue CDs for non-private patients, unless the doctor or consultant who referred you has asked us to).

A radiologist will dictate a report which will be sent to the doctor or consultant who referred you, usually within 48 hours. Your report will contain a summary of the radiologist's findings and their recommendations for further follow-up.

You will need to arrange an appointment to discuss your report with the doctor or consultant who referred you.

Our chaperone service

All patients are entitled to have a chaperone present for any consultation, examination or procedure if they feel it is necessary. This chaperone may be a family member or friend.

Sometimes it may be necessary for a formal chaperone (for example, a trained member of staff) to be present.

Please let us know before your appointment if you would like a chaperone.

Further questions

If you have any further questions or worries please do not hesitate to reach out to a member of our team. Your comfort and safety is of utmost importance to us.

For further information, including contact details and directions on how to find us, please visit our website: www.harleystreet-medicalcentre.com.

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We are committed to providing clean, safe premises for our clients in line with the Health and Social Care Act 2012, Code of Practice on the Prevention and Control of Infections and related guidance (December 2010) and all other Department of Health guidance.